Application No. 10/686,835 Attorney Docket No.: 13/083-2-C1 (539/12)

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A An isolated eukaryotic host cell transfected with a self-replicating polynucleotide comprising:

- (a) a 5'-Non Translated Region;
- (b) a HCV polynucleotide coding region <u>as defined in SEQ ID NO. 1</u> encoding an HCV polyprotein comprising: <u>NS2</u>, NS3, NS4A, NS4B, NS5A, and NS5B proteins, said polynucleotide coding region <u>further encoding an eomprising one or more amino acid substitution at position 1233 of SEQ ID NO. 1, said substitution substitutions selected from the group consisting of: R(1135)K, S(1148)G, S(1560)G, K(1691)R, L(1701)F, L(1984)V, T(1993)A, <u>commonly designated</u> G(2042)C, <u>and</u> G(2042)R, S(2404)P, L(2155)P, P(2166)L, and M(2992)T, and</u>
- (c) a 3'-Non Translated Region.
- 2. (canceled)
- 3. (currently amended) The host cell according to claim 2 1, wherein said eukaryotic cell line is a hepatic cell line.
- 4. (currently amended) The host cell according to claim 3, wherein said hepatic cell line is Huh-7.
- 5. (withdrawn) A RNA replication assay comprising the steps of:
 - (a) incubating the host cell according to claim 1 under conditions suitable for RNA replication;
 - (b) isolating the total cellular RNA from the cells; and
 - (c) analyzing the RNA so as to measure the amount of HCV RNA replicated.
- 6. (withdrawn) The assay according to claim 5, wherein the analysis of RNA levels in step (c) is

carried out by amplifying the RNA by real-time RT-PCR analysis using HCV specific primers so as to measure the amount of HCV RNA replicated.

- 7. (withdrawn) The assay according to claim 5, wherein said polynucleotide encodes for a reporter gene, and the analysis of RNA levels in step (c) is carried out by assessing the level of reporter expressed.
- 8. (withdrawn) A method for testing a compound for inhibiting HCV replication, including the steps of:
 - (a) carrying step (a) according to claim 5, in the presence or absence of the compound;
 - (b) isolating the total cellular RNA from the cells;
 - (c) analyzing the RNA so as to measure the amount of HCV RNA replicated; and
 - (d) comparing the levels of HCV RNA in cells in the absence and presence of the
 - , inhibitor,

wherein reduced RNA levels is indicative of the ability of the compound to inhibit replication.

- 9. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 8, wherein said cell line is incubated with the test compound for about 3-4 days at a temperature of about 37°C.
- 10. (new) An isolated eukaryotic cell according to claim 1, wherein said polynucleotide is a DNA molecule selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 24 and 25.
- 11. (new) An isolated eukaryotic cell according to claim 1, wherein said polynucleotide is an RNA molecule encoded by a DNA selected from the group consisting of: SEQ ID NO, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 24 and 25.
- 12. (new) The cell according to claim 10, wherein said eukaryotic cell line is a hepatic cell line.
- 13. (new) The cell according to claim 11, wherein said eukaryotic cell line is a hepatic cell line.